



CITY COUNCIL

Work Session

***Work Session
Penn Room***

***Monday, November 21, 2011
7:00 P.M.***

Although Council Work Sessions are open to the public, public comment is not permitted. However, citizens are encouraged to attend and observe the work sessions. Comment from citizens or professionals during the work session may be solicited on agenda topics via invitation by the Council President.

- I. Call to Order**
- II. Managing Director's Report**
- III. Council Staff Report**
- IV. Discussion Reinstatement of Residency for City Employees**
- V. Adjourn**

City of Reading
City Council
Work Session
Monday, October 17, 2011

Councilors Attending: V. Spencer, F. Acosta, M. Goodman-Hinnershitz, S. Marmarou, D. Reed, D. Sterner, J. Waltman

Others Attending: L. Kelleher, C. Geffken, C. Younger, A. Boscov, D. Robinson, D. Wright, J. Kromer, R. Natale, D. Kersley, F. Denbowski, S. Welz

Vaughn D. Spencer, President of Council, called the Work Session to order at approximately 7:30 pm.

Managing Director's Report

Mr. Geffken read the report distributed to Council at the meeting covering the following:

- Update on the North Front Street paving project
- Start of the City's Fall Leaf Collection Program
- Eligibility for \$4.5M in disaster relief from FEMA for conditions caused by Hurricane Irene and Tropical Storm Lee
- Noting the completion of the draft Housing permit and Zoning amendment ordinances and noting that 29,979 of the homes currently occupied in Reading, 17,276 are rental properties

Ms. Reed inquired about the traffic problems at Riverside Elementary School caused by the North Front Street Paving Project. Mr. Geffken stated that the traffic problems have been resolved.

NSP2 Update

Mr. Robinson stated that the City received a \$5M NSP2 grant from the federal government approximately three (3) years ago. He stated that only two (2) communities in Pennsylvania received the NSP2 grant; Reading and Philadelphia. He stated that a consortium was formed in the grant application. The consortium members are the Reading Housing Authority, Our City Reading, and the Community Development office who handles the administrative portion of the program. He stated

that the HUD grant requires the majority of the grant to be used in a defined area selected by HUD. HUD chose the Ricktown area after reviewing the census data. The City was permitted to select one (1) additional area that qualified and the Mineral Spring Road area was chosen.

Mr. Boscov's stated that to-date three (3) NSP2 homes have sold, three (3) homes are awaiting settlement, twelve (12) homes are ready for marketing, and eight (8) homes are under construction. He also noted that seven (7) homes are in the acquisition process. He stated that Sovereign Bank has picked up most of the mortgages. He stated that the program requires the purchaser to put \$500 down and take eight (8) weeks of housing education. He stated that the profits from sales are recycled into the grant fund.

Mr. Boscov's stated that a select number of homes can be rehabilitated outside of the defined area.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz inquired about the selection of the area. Mr. Wright stated that the area was selected by HUD after the City's census tracts for low-income eligibility was reviewed. HUD selected census tracts 10, 11, 12, and 13. The Mineral Spring Road area is tract 18. He stated that the City is considering applying for an amendment to the grant program to allow some of the money to be used for demolition. He stated that currently the fund is only being used for acquisition and rehabilitation.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz agreed with the concept of amending the grant program to allow demolition as many of the homes on the census tracts are devalued to a point where rehabilitation is more costly than the home is worth.

Mr. Marmarou and Ms. Reed noted the need for the City to also support strong neighborhoods. They noted that focusing all the City's resources in one area can create problems in other areas, as one (1) blighted building in a stable neighborhood can bring the neighborhood down quickly.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz noted the need to compare the available funding sources against the housing strategy to determine their best use.

Ms. Reed noted the need for Community Development to explore available programs and funding sources that can be used to de-convert rental properties to owner-occupied properties.

Amendment to Housing and Zoning Ordinance

Mr. Kersley and Mr. Welz stated that currently 1,479 properties are stuck in the Zoning

backlog created by the original housing permit process. They stated that the housing permit amendment clarifies various issues within the ordinance, strengthens the penalties and provides the means to withdraw Zoning permits from homes that fall out of compliance.

Mr. Kersley stated that the ordinances were planned and drafted by a work group composed of Ms. Butler, Ms. Kelleher, the Zoning Administrator, Mr. Natale, Mr. Welz, and himself. He noted that the City has also done other things to improve the housing process such as increasing the frequency of housing inspections, implementing the Quality of Life ticketing program, and automating the housing process. He stated that the group will be convening again soon to discuss the means to limit the conversion of single-family homes into rental properties.

Mr. Welz expressed the belief that the successful implementation of the ordinance will provide fair enforcement and help stabilize rental housing. He noted that the ordinance changes the annual registration process by requiring an annual permit. He stated that an annual application will be mailed to the landlord and when completing the application the landlord will be affirming that his property meets all the City codes requirements.

Mr. Kersley explained the parameters of the 1,479 properties that are in the Zoning backlog. He stated that approximately one-half of these properties will be permitted as they will meet the City's requirements; however, approximately 780 properties will require Conditional Use hearings. He stated that before permits are issued to any properties an initial inspection will occur to make sure that the number of units at the rental property agrees with the number recognized by the City.

Mr. Welz noted the escalated no-show fee and compliance penalties. He stated that the ordinance also addresses the registration of vacant properties. He noted that the review of the Zoning ordinance raised the issue of requiring a Conditional Use procedure. Within the procedure, Council can select the means for a Conditional Use hearing, such as using an independent attorney, an individual member of Council, or the full body of Council.

Ms. Kelleher distributed the list of backlog properties.

Mr. Welz stated that the group is suggesting using an independent attorney to handle properties for one (1) through four (4) units, have individual members of Council hold hearings for properties with five (5) to six (6) units, and require full Conditional Use hearings by the full body of Council for the remaining properties.

Mr. Waltman expressed the belief that the ordinance has the tools to somewhat correct the breakdown that occurred in the former AHO process.

Mr. Marmarou inquired about the City's ability to properly enforce the ordinance. Ms. Kelleher and Mr. Geffken stated that the Codes office plans to hire an additional four (4) Property Maintenance Inspectors to handle inspections and two (2) Inspectors to attend to the pre-settlement inspection and the Blighted Property process.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz suggested educating other agencies about the City's housing requirements so they can identify properties that do not comply.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz suggested that each individual District Councilor handle hearings for properties within their own District.

Mr. Waltman expressed his belief in the approach both ordinances take; however, he suggested reviewing the implementation process before the ordinances are enacted.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz inquired about the enactment timeline. Ms. Kelleher stated that the Public Hearing for the Zoning amendment is scheduled for October 18th at 5pm in Council Chambers, making the ordinances eligible for enactment at the Regular Meeting of Council scheduled for Monday, October 24th.

Review 2012 CDBG Action Plan

Copies of the CDBG Action Plan were distributed. Mr. Geffken stated that the new draft budget reflects input from the Mayor and Managing Director. He reviewed the various components contained in the Action Plan. The Action Plan provides funding in the following areas:

- CDBG \$2.8M
- HOME (Our City Reading, Habitat for Humanity, NHS) \$1.7M
- ESG \$170K
- 108 loan payments \$628K

Ms. Reed objected to providing BCTV with a contribution of \$74K. She stated that she supports the service provided by BCTV; however the City could be pushing people towards its website if the City had purchased the Granicus equipment for the Penn Room instead. She also questioned funding organizations who obtain the majority of their annual revenue from fundraising activities.

Mr. Acosta questioned the reduction in funding for the Reading Public Library. He expressed the belief that the lack of full funding may create the need for reductions in operational hours and lay-offs. Ms. Kelleher noted that the CDBG budget contains funding for building improvements for the various Reading Public Library branches.

The group next discussed various funding initiatives.

Ms. Reed stated that need that Council needs to remember the ranking of the City's core services by the Administration, City Council, and the public when considering the City's General Fund budget and CDBG Action Plan.

The Work Session adjourned at approximately 9:20pm.

Respectfully submitted by Linda A. Kelleher CMC, City Clerk



Council Staff Report

9/01/11 through 10/31/11

Council Staff

Linda Kelleher, City Clerk

Michelle Katzenmoyer, Deputy City Clerk

Maritza Loaiza, Administrative Assistant

Michelle Reinhart, Intern

Constituent Service

The following table is a rough tabulation of the number and type of issues addressed by the Council Office:

Calls for Directory Assistance

Call Type	Number of Calls
Solid Waste	8
Codes	66
Tax	4
Mayor	8
Police	44
Fire	0
Community Development	2
Planning & Zoning	6
Human Resources	4
Accounting/Finance	6
Law	5
Managing Director	8
RAWA	22
Public Works	4
IT	9
Parking Authority	1
Services Center	49
Human Relations Commission	4
Parks/Recreation	1
Streets	1
Building and Trades	9

Purchasing	5
Treasury	1
Auditor	0
Sanitary Sewers	5
Total Calls	272

<u>Message for Council</u>	<u>Complaints</u>	<u>Non-City Directory Assistance</u>	<u>Calls Handled In- Office</u>	<u>Total Calls</u>	<u>Walk -Ins</u>	<u>Email Requests</u>	<u>Email Complaints</u>	<u>Total Email</u>	<u>Total Constituent Service</u>
28	14	80	664	1058	103	848	618	1466	2627

Houses Identified As Missing Housing Permits, Business Licenses, or Zoning

Areas Covered: MDJ Cases
Property transactions
Citizen complaints
Assessment Appeals

Total (Since Feb. 2008): Approx. 11,253

Staff Activities

Between 9/01/11 and 10/31/11 Council staff accomplished the following tasks:

Drafted and Prepared

Linda:

- Budget, Tax and Fee Ads
- New Ordinance Ads
- Meeting ads for Council, Rec Commission, Citizens Advisory Board, Legislative Aide Committee
- Fund Transfer Ordinance
- Bank Accounts and Funds Ordinance
- Parking Meter Zone Amendment
- Zoning Amendment re Zoning Administrator's Duties and Conditional Use Procedure
- Ordinance Reducing Number of Sergeants Positions
- Budget Review Agendas, Minutes, and Follow-up Lists
- Ads, Notices, Letters, re Zoning Amendment re Zoning Administrator's Duties and Conditional Use Procedure
- Ads, Notices, Letters & Decision re Zoning Amendment Request

- Transmission memos CORE MOU, Rec Commission MOU, Zoning Map and Ordinance amendments
- PHFA Letter re Blighted Property Ownership
- Zoning Backlog Property Disposition
- Agendas, Meeting Reports Special Meetings and Public Hearings
- Updated Zoning Change Request Application

Michelle K:

- BAC Expiration letters
- BAC Background Checks
- BAC Background Issues letters
- Complaint Updates
- Solicitation Permit Database Update
- Accounts Payable
- Staff Report
- Meeting Summaries
- Meeting Agendas – including ipad preparations
- Financial Interest Statements
- Update website Boards, Authorities and Commissions
- Office Supply orders
- 10 Year Park and Open Space Plan survey compilation
- Review Draft Audit
- Temporary Signs memo
- BAC non-resident letter – Briner
- BAC recruitment letter – Lerch
- BAC recruitment letter – Blanski
- Update Codified Ordinances
- NIMS 200 training
- Amendment to Animal Control Ordinance
- Recreation Commission Handbook
- Recreation Commission Agenda
- Snowstorm Disaster Declaration Resolution
- Commendations
 - Labor Day
 - 6th Ward Reunion
 - Hispanic Heritage Month
 - Ernie Schlegel
 - Fire Prevention Month Rev. Spyridon Papademetriou
 - Blue Mountain Sports Club
- Appointment/Reappointment Resolutions
 - Melvyn Jacobson
 - Barbara D'Agostino
 - Geraldine Westley
 - Candice Mayton
 - Pamela Cianciosi

- Kevin Devera
- Michael Fiucci
- Kelly Christman
- William Bender
- Councilors to serve on Recreation Commission Dennis Straub
- William Hall

Maritza:

- Copy and distribute all memos, handouts, and agendas per City Clerk to Council and other departments
- Scan legislation
- File all paperwork (i.e., contracts, minutes, agendas, bills, ordinances, resolutions, etc.) accordingly
- Distribute incoming mail to office staff and council members
- Register meeting speakers as requested
- Prepare and mail Thank You letter for invocators at City Council meetings
- Prepare and mail Thank You letters to speakers
- Answer constituent questions to best of my ability, forwarded complaints to appropriate departments, and updated complaint log
- Assisted constituents with legislative information they were researching or requesting
- Mail all necessary handouts/paperwork to BAC members
- Translate any needed fliers and documents
- Locate, Scan, and/or Copy requested legislation for various departments, other entities, or constituents.
- Type and correct dictation done by City Clerk
- Complete accounts payable forms and update budget
- Prepare Council agenda packets
- Prepare Board of Health agenda packets
- Prepare Board of Health minutes
- Provide IT with live update information for online codified ordinances
- Complete all certified and first class mailings for BPRC
- Scan all agenda and additional information for Administrative Oversight Committee and BPRC to access during meetings
- Scan and archive old legislation into DocStar

Michelle R:

- Copy and distribute all memos, handouts, and agendas per City Clerk to Council and all other departments as necessary
- File all paperwork (ie. contracts, minutes, agendas, invoices, ordinances, resolutions, etc.) accordingly
- Scan and archive Reading Eagle articles

- Distribute incoming mail to office staff and Council members
- Mail all necessary handouts/paperwork to BAC members
- Research candidate properties for BPRC process and mail correspondence
- Prepare Council agenda packets
- Answer constituent questions to best of my ability, forwarded complaints to appropriate departments and updated complaint log

All staff:

- Committee of the Whole minutes, Committee meeting minutes and Regular minutes
- Drafted correspondence and memos for members of Council

Researched

Linda:

- Conservation Districts and limitations on single family rentals
- Census Information for Redistricting Committee
- Redistricting procedures
- Homestead Act
- MPC re “by right” use for rental of single family properties
- Conditional Use Zoning procedures

Michelle K:

- None

Maritza:

- None

Michelle R:

- None

Meetings Attended

Linda:

Legal and

- 9-6 - Promotion Oath to Sgt Stone
- 9-6 - Housing Permit Ordinance meeting w/ Business Analyst, Codes Mgr
- 9-8 - Act 47 Implementation Meeting
- 9-9 - Inspection of south side housing with John Kromer
- 9-13 - Legal and RBAR re CORE Program
- 9-13 - BCAP
- 9-14 - Legal re BPRC Property Review
- 9-15 - Conference Call w/ Habitat for Humanity re BRPC
- 9-15 - BPRC Determination Hearing
- 9-16 - Chris Dirr & Kent Wrobel & RRA re Navy Marine Center
- 9-19 - Managing Director and Legal re Assessment Appeals

9-20 - Business Analyst, Codes Manager, Legal re Housing Permit Ordinance
 9-20 - Public Hearing Zoning Map Amendment
 9-21 - Managing Director, Legal re CORE
 9-21 - Oath Barb D'Augustino re Redistricting Committee
 9-22 - Mel Jacobsen re Redistricting Committee
 9-23 - John Kramer re Municipal Officials Dinner
 9-23 - Legal, CD, RRA re eminent domain
 9-27 - BCAP
 9-27 - Master Planner Dinner
 9-28 - Settlement re Refinancing of Bond
 9-29 - Housing Strategy w/ John Kromer
 9-29 - Library Meeting re District application
 9-29 - Legal, RRA and CD re eminent domain
 9-30 - Oath to Candace Mayton re CAB
 10-3 - Special Mtg Introduce Budget
 10-4 - Oath Pam Cianosi re CAB
 10-4 - Habitat for Humanity re BPRC
 10-5 - Budget Review
 10-6 - Legal, Managing Director re CORE
 10-6 - Act 47 Recovery Implementation
 10-6 - District 5 Community Group
 10-7 - Oath John Short re CAB
 10-7 - Legal and RBAR re CORE
 10-7 - Albright Student Off Campus Housing Meeting
 10-11 - Historic District Meeting
 10-11 - BCAP
 10-12 - R-BAR and Codes Mgr re Housing Issues
 10-12 - Budget Review
 10-14 - HOME Meeting w/ Managing Director and CD
 10-15 - Budget Review
 10-16 - Zoning Amendment Public Hearing
 10-19 - BPRC Property Review w/ Legal
 10-19 - PHFA Conference Call re Blighted Property Ownership
 10-19 - RRA, CD, Legal re eminent domain
 10-20 - Oath Bill Hall re Rec Commission
 10-20 - BPRC Determination Hearing
 10-21 - Oath Eddie Moran re Rec Commission
 10-21 - Oath Paster Opalinski re Citizens Advisory Board
 10-22 - Budget Review
 10-25 - John Kromer & R-BAR re Housing Alliance Conference engagement re BPRC & CORE
 10-25 - Oath Dennis Straub re ACB
 10-26 - County Treasurer, Legal re BPRC & Repository Properties
 10-26 - General Fund Public Hearing
 10-26 - Budget Review

Speaking

10-29 - Budget Review
10-31 - CIP Public Hearing
10-31 - Budget Review

Michelle K: 9/7 – Administrative Oversight Committee
9/8 – Bid opening – 5th & Bingaman Warning Signal
9/9 – RFP opening – Historic Preservation Services
9/12 – Committee of the Whole
9/14 – Bid opening – Calibration of Instruments at WWTP
9/14 – Board of Ethics
9/19 – 1100 block Allegheny Ave
9/19 – Public Works Committee
9/20 – Park and Recreation Advisory Committee
9/22 – International Institute of Municipal Clerks training on
change and transition
9/23 – Bid opening – Street Paving
9/26 – Committee of the Whole
9/28 – Administrative Oversight Committee
9/28 – Board of Ethics
9/29 – Webinar on interpreting census data
10/3 – Administrative Oversight Committee
10/7 – Zoning Roundtable
10/10 – Committee of the Whole
10/17 – Budget Meeting
10/18 – Bid Opening – Recycling Processing
10/18 – Park and Recreation Advisory Committee
10/24 – Committee of the Whole
10/25 – Environmental Advisory Council “Summit”
10/25 – Environmental Advisory Council
10/31 – Capital Improvement Plan Public Hearing
10/31 – Special Meeting
10/31 – Waste Water Treatment Plant Update

Maritza: 9/30 – Bid opening – Berks County Co-op Gasoline

Michelle R: 9/15 – Blighted Property Review Committee

Requests for Information – 3

Activities of Boards, Authorities and Commissions

Environmental Advisory Council – The EAC planned their next summit which will be held at Canal Street. They also heard updates on Smart Growth Alliance and work on the rain barrel regulations. Ms. Hoag updated the EAC on the clean-up work performed to date at Bernhart Park and Ms. Katzenmoyer gave an update on the Pandora Park/Olivet building project. They

also received updates from Ms. Hoag on the stormwater permit and utility fee issues. Ms. Hoag also updated the EAC on updates to the floodplain ordinance. In October, the EAC held its summit at Canal Street Pub with guest presenter Paul Carter, Senior Account Executive of Noresco regarding the Guaranteed Energy Savings Program. After the summit, the EAC held a brief meeting to discuss the continued remediation of Bernhart Park and the condition of Cemetery Lane in regards to large truck traffic using this private drive. Citizens witnessing problems at this location are urged to call PA DEP.

Park and Recreation Advisory Committee – The PARC received a report from Recreation on activity for the month of September. They continued their work to update the City's 10 Year Park and Open Space Plan and heard an update regarding the Recreation Commission. There was also discussion regarding update playground renovations for the 2012 budget year. In October, the Committee received the resignation of the chair as he has been appointed to the Recreation Commission. He will continue to work to update the Plan and will update the Rec Commission on the work done to update the Plan to date. The Committee learned that there are no rehabilitation projects scheduled for parks or playgrounds in 2012.

Board of Ethics – The Board of Ethics met twice in September to continue their work to incorporate the "Pay to Play" into the Ethics Code and to discuss two pending complaints.

Board of Health – The Board of Health did not meet in September or October. The next meeting will be held on November 2.

Blighted Property Review Committee – The BPRC will be holding Certification hearings in November and December for approximately 33 properties. Meetings with the Reading Berks Association of Realtors (R-BAR) continue. We are working to start the CORE program around the beginning of March 2012. A list of eligible properties was sent to R-BAR and their CORE Team reviewed the properties and assembled them into blocks for marketing purposes (see list below). John Kromer invited R-BAR the City Clerk and CD Specialist to make a presentation on the CORE Program and the Blighted Property process at the Housing Alliance State-wide conference the 2nd week in November.

The Administration asked the BPRC to slow the blighted process down beginning in 2012, as they would like to develop an improved process to dispose of certified properties. The BPRC agreed to focus only on CORE eligible areas during the first 2-4 rounds in 2012 which will help to pump more properties in the CORE program.

First Phase (Pilot)

602 North 3rd Street
737 North 4th Street
1121 Amity Street

Second Phase

1621 North 15th Street
1530 North 12th Street
1401 North 13th Street
1410 North 13th Street

1438 Birch Street
1312 Birch Street
1222 Linden Street
1161 North 13th Street
1809 Hessian Road
1813 Hessian Road
904 Old Wyomissing Road
2257 Raymond
2237 Raymond

Third Phase

820 Summit Chase Dr
915 Summit Chase Dr
805 Summit Chase Dr
807 Summit Chase Dr
815 Summit Chase Dr
813 Summit Chase Dr
409 Upland Ave
859 S Parkside Dr
1332 Allegheny

Reading LRA – The LRA has amended its reuse plan. The existing main facility will be transferred to Mary's Shelter and the remaining 6 acres will be purchased by the Reading Redevelopment Authority. The Navy has required the LRA to complete a survey of the property which will provide the new layout of the parcel. The survey is being completed by John Hoffert Surveyors.

Redistricting Committee - The Redistricting Committee has started to meet. Mel Jacobsen was appointed as Chair. The group is supported by Mike Golembiewski, County Planner and the Legislative Aide Committee. Mr. Golembiewski provided census materials and information of working with that data. The growth of approximately 8,000 people was spread fairly evenly over the City Council Districts. The Committee is currently evaluating the need to adjust the district boundary lines.

Citizens Advisory Board & Redistricting Committee - The CAB has also started to meet. They are currently working through some organizational issues. Their minutes have been shared with you are posted on the City's website. Their next meeting is December 1st at 7 pm in the Penn Room.